

BSA President Report, 2022-2023

Selected highlights

Throughout the year we continued with the implementation of the BSA Strategic Plan which has four main strategic priorities: Human Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Research and Scholarly Excellence, Organizational Impact and Visibility, and Professional Development. Out of our 57 strategies in the plan, we have actively worked on 36 of them this year.

A new Ethical Guidelines for Nominated Awards and Invited Speakers/Panelists was developed and implemented this year. It was created to address several concerns about BSA awards and selected awardees. Thanks to the Ad Hoc Comm and Rachel Jabaily who chaired the committee.

The Board approved a request to amend the Emerging Leader Award description allowing, in extraordinary circumstances, two awards instead of one.

The Early Career Professional Development Committee is now a standard BSA Committee, and the number of members was expanded from 3 to 7.

Through an anonymous ~\$300,000 donation, an endowed research award for graduate students in comparative plant biology was established in January 2022. A committee of six members was appointed in November 2022 and the 1st \$10,000 was awarded this year, 2023. Thanks to Michael Donahue who chaired the committee.

In November 2022 we signed a letter that provides input on the discussion draft of the One Health Security Act, and in July 2023 we crafted a statement reaffirming BSA commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

Restructuring the Botany & Beyond NSF grant (\$1.2 million) has been challenging and is ongoing. A great deal of my time and effort from August-November 2022 was allocated to help address the need to restructure and rebudget the grant, working toward making a subaward to one of the PIs and institutions involved. Despite the challenges, activities are well underway in the second year of this grant. Currently, Heather Cacanindin serves as the Co-PI from BSA and the leader of the PLANTS component, Anna Monfils serves as the PI for the entire grant and leader of the Science Identity Workshop portion, and Muriel Poston serves as the Co-PI and leader of the Inclusive Teaching Initiative. Thanks to Michael Donahue for his high level of commitment and assistance during the restructuring process, and Ann Sakai for continuing to work on the PLANTS program.

Multiple Executive Committee meetings were held throughout the year to discuss ethics related issues. Thanks to the committee for productive discussions and willing to meet more frequently.

Our publications contract negotiations with Wiley came to term and the agreement was signed in December 2022. Many thanks to Heather Cacanindin and Amy McPherson for securing the best possible contract with Wiley.

Our APPS Editor-in-Chief Briana Gross and Managing Editor Beth Parada worked on a transparent and fair process for providing APC waivers to authors in financial need. This process has been reviewed by the Board and is being shared on Wiley's site.

The first call for applications of our newly established AJB Synthesis Papers and Prize was a success. In the first round, launched in 2022, we asked 8 applicants (out of the original 20) to submit papers; and in 2023 we awarded the first Synthesis Prize.

I evaluated the performance of our Executive Director, Heather Cacanindin, and established her new salary with the Missouri Botanical Garden. Thanks to Michael Donahue and Brenda Molano-Flores for their help with the annual performance review.

Planning for the Botany 2023 conference in Boise, ID took extra time and effort, i.e., a working group was assembled to develop a plan to make our 2nd hybrid meeting more efficient than Botany 2022; a new platform is in place with a company called X-CD. Our deepest gratitude to Melanie Link-Perez and Johanne Stogran for their dedication, and to the entire Program Planning Committee for being so responsive to BSA members' safety concerns and making adjustments throughout the process.

We provided \$11,000 to support 4 submitted symposia at Botany 2023, and \$1,500 to cover the registration expense of 4 award winners for the ROOT & SHOOT SACNAS/MANRRS travel awards.

All the contracts necessary for Botany 2024 at Grand Rapids, Michigan are signed. Thanks to Johanne Stogran for this effort.

The BSA Advisory Council met for the first time outside of its usual annual meeting in July to discuss the 1) planned BSA Membership Survey, 2) BSA climate change initiative, and 3) newly established Ethical Guidelines for Nominated Awards and Invited Speakers/Panelists.

A BSA Membership survey was assembled and distributed to BSA members. Topics included leadership, education, conferences, publications, communications, and membership. Thanks to everyone who helped put this together, specifically to Amelia Neely.

We continued to be actively involved with the Root & Shoot RCN and Indigenous Voices LEAPS projects with Catrina Adams and Brenda Molano-Flores serving on the steering committee of Root & Shoot, while Anna Monfils and Heather Cacanindin serve on the Indigenous Voices Steering Committee.

Botany360 actively continued with events this year. We hosted workshops on applying to grad school, use the resources of the Botany Conference in teaching, reviews and meta-analysis, prepping for PLANTS, etc. Thanks to Amelia Neely for leading this project.

The BSA celebrated the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Endangered Species Act during the week of the National Endangered Species Day. Several resources were put together for the week celebration, May 15-19, 2023. Thanks to everyone who helped put this together, specifically to Amelia Neely and Amy McPherson.

Under the leadership of Brenda Molano-Flores, the Committee on Committees carried out its work and filled the various open slots. This was the third year in which we used a new committee application procedure, and again this worked fine.

Our PlantingScience educational outreach program and Education staff put on three summer training workshops in June and July as part of our F2 (\$3.8 million) five-year grant. Thanks to Catrina Adams and Jennifer Hartley for their work to pull together these events and work with our F2 Fellows, scientists, and all of the middle and high school teachers throughout the year.

The BSA will be developing a climate change initiative. We thank the BSA Board and Advisory Council for supporting this endeavor and suggesting possible actions to include in the initiative. An Ad hoc committee will be organized soon to chart planning and implementation.

To conclude, it has been a privilege, an honor, and a learning experience to serve this year as President of BSA. It has also been a great pleasure thanks to the leadership and support of our Executive Director, Heather Cacanindin; the BSA Board; and all BSA staff. Extended gratitude goes to presidents Michael Donahue and Brenda Molano-Flores for numerous informed discussions, in particular to Michael for countless interactions and discussions to resolve unforeseeable issues. We have a remarkable team who care deeply about our botanical community!

Respectfully submitted on July 12, 2023

Vivian Negrón-Ortiz

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